

The Church School Teacher

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No. 1

Just a Few Words

By THE EDITOR

IT IS the turn of the year. Behind us are the days past, the failures, the successes. Whose failures? Ours. Whose successes? God's.

A person ought to get comfort from that. And humility if he is inclined toward pride. Paul put it precisely in urging Christians to "work out your own salvation with fear and trembling" adding the important fact "for God is at work in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure."

1956 Demands Decisions

Obey God. Work like fury. That is the good word for 1956. Obey and work with confidence, for God himself will be at work in 1956. And at every stage be honest enough in retrospect to wonder at all—the successes will be God's, the failures will be yours, just like 1955.

It is the turn of the year. Before the three hundred sixty-six un-

used days. They demand some decisions before the threshold is crossed. Remember the young man who asked Jesus what good deed he must do to have eternal life? "Keep the commandments," said our Lord. The young man persisted. The commandments he had observed, what did he lack? "If you would be perfect, go, sell what you possess and give it to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me." Matthew writes that the young man went away, sorrowful; for he had great possessions.

For Sale

For us who are committed to the teaching ministry of the Church it seems no coincidence that the paragraph preceding this story is about Jesus laying his hands upon children and saying, "Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them; for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven."

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The meaning might be, I think it is, that the teacher must sell some of his possessions if he is to follow Christ, the Teacher.

One possession to sell is the inclination to say "yes". Sell it to the lowest bidder. An old saying goes like this: "A wise man is one who no's a lot." The world is going at a furious pace. Only Anne Morrow Lindbergh knows enough to meditate on a seashore. But a teacher must refuse to become caught in the whirlwind, 'though the whole world be drawn into it. This will I do, I will teach, the teacher must insist. No more than one other job in church for the teacher should be the rule of thumb.

Lukewarmness is another possession we should sell. Better, pour it down the sink. To know what God thinks of lukewarm people read the third chapter of Revelation. "I will spew you out of my mouth," says the Spirit. If you think "spew" is a kind word consult your dictionary. The lukewarm make God sick at the stomach.

Wanted: Revolutionists

Put fresh water on your range and heat it to boiling. Get enthusiastic. This gospel and this teacher's job we have is the hope of the world. "We have this treasure", St. Paul writes. True, he adds "in earthen vessels", but

that is merely to keep us in our place and to show that the glory belongs to God. We are teaching God's life-giving gospel, the power of salvation. How can we treat it so lightly? Or become so easily discouraged? Or be satisfied in just going through the motions. A kindergarten teacher told me her object in teaching is to get children to sit quietly and reverently in church. Pour out such lukewarm objectives. Let Christ's light shine into the child and let God's grace nurture him. We have too many people sitting quietly in church. What we need are more revolutionists.

Our National Blight

The third possession we should sell is our dull concord. Dull concord is a national blight which is withering our minds. Who argue anymore about vital issues? Only the prophets and they are shut up in the Bible. Today's national spokesmen awake from their sleep only when someone mentions "communist". Then, long enough only to mumble: "Communists? I hate them. Nobody hates them as much as I hate them." There is no longer any choice between Democrats and Republicans. The Republican administration hates the communists and Russia wins the diplomatic victories. The Democratic congress hates the communists yet passes no laws to use the

ly hopeful weapon, economic aid underdeveloped areas of the world. Everybody hates the communists. Is there someone who loves anybody? In the meantime our military machine drains off our money, our brains, and our youth.

Rose-colored Glasses

And we who should have the kind of Christ in us go along with all. There is no sharpness left in us. Dull concord is our blight. Sometime ago a minister publicly praised our country's newspapers for an aid to youth. They fill a vital need in our crisis-ridden times by providing hope and inspiration for youth, according to this pastor. How rose-colored can our glasses get, I wondered as I glanced at the front page of my paper with its stories of two kidnappers of a young Negro, an anarchist fireman, a teenage bandit, and a grain company whose management and union officials were charged with collaboration to cheat the company's workers.

Dull concord. "You have a fine church," I remarked to an elderly layman. "Looks like you're getting somewhere."

"Everything's fine," he replied. "We like our pastor. Doing a good job. And what a Brotherhood we

have! Last week there were eighty-five out for our meeting. What a program. Yep, had our Boy Scouts there, too."

"Sounds wonderful," said I. "What was the program?"

"The program? We had the Colonel over from the ordnance plant. Lectured to us on guided missiles. Showed movies about them, too. Wonderful program."

Guided missiles at Brotherhood. Human stomachs turn, too. I thought about a better subject—guided missiles. In one of them St. Paul wrote: "whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things."

A Fresh Page

But it is the turn of the year we are writing about. Three hundred sixty-six days. Fresh. Unused. For us who are in the teaching business it means selling a lot of possessions. And following Christ. I think that means saying "no" to many things, getting hot to the boiling point, and relating the gospel to the real world in which we live, at least to something more alive than sitting still in church.

From Your Director

By L. H. WESTBERG

"Nobody has ever thought that Jesus was a sissy, or was wasting His time when He said, 'Let the little children come to me.' He was beginning at the beginning". That is a sentence from a National Council of Churches tract entitled *Men Needed for the Pre-School Departments*.

Job Openings

It is plain unadulterated propaganda with a new appeal to men who thought they were too old or too clumsy for a teacher's job with the two, three, or four-year-olds. The tract brings home this fact: there are jobs open for men to teach in the Sunday school nursery and kindergarten classes. The pay is poor, of course, by money standards. But if a man wants to lay up treasures where neither moth nor rust consume and where thieves do not break in and steal, here is a job beyond compare.

The tract also makes it *respectable* for men to teach the little ones. So you women who need

helpers in your nursery or kindergarten, get your education committee to work on the men. Who knows, maybe your husband is a likely candidate, now that it is the thing to do. Tell your education committee to order some tracts to help them in their enlistment. Four cents each, the tracts sell for. Three dollars per one hundred. Order from the National Council of Churches, 79 E. Adams Street, Chicago, Illinois. A note on the tract says, "Kindly pay with order. Please add for postage and handling: 15 cents for each \$1.00 or portion thereof up to \$5.00, plus 5 cents per dollar over \$5.00."

"Together"

Well, the Boards of Youth Activities and Parish Education have finished the first year of the *Together* schools. Three more years to go—the enthusiasts say "and then some"—in a strenuous program to enlist and train workers with high school youth.

This year we visited each di

ect in the Illinois, Iowa and New York conferences. New England chose one large conference-wide school. The schools were held on week-ends during September, October and November, two schools each weekend. Sessions usually ran from 2:30 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. Participants were selected adults from the local congregations—present and prospective. Hi-League counselors, present and prospective high school Bible class teachers, pastors, internes, deacons, Sunday school superintendents, professional parish workers, and parents.

Specific and Practical

Two teams of instructors were sent out from the Youth Activities and Parish Education offices. Miss Elvie Mae Olson and Pastor Carl Manfred led the schools in Iowa and New York. Dr. Wilton E. Bergstrand and I staffed the New England and Illinois schools. It was not easy to fit every weekend into our already packed autumn medules. But we feel it was highly worthwhile and already we are anticipating next fall's schools. The schools had a carefully planned course for the day. Our aim was to help those attending do a better job of working together in their own congregations and build better Hi-Leagues and high school Bible classes. Together, therefore, we studied the Bible, took a careful look at high

school youth, and worked out specific ways to help youth through the League and the Bible class. The subject matter of the day's course was designed to be specific and practical. From the response of those attending it appeared that it succeeded.

Enlistment Needed

The response from the congregations was gratifying. Most sent teams. But the number of *prospective* Bible class teachers and counselors did not equal our expectations. From all over the Church comes the question: "Why do we lose our youth after confirmation?" The inquirers generally answer their own question: "We need more and better trained Bible class teachers and Hi-League counselors." It was for this reason that the *Together* program got under way. And it was hoped that the congregations would use the schools as a spring board to enlist *new* workers. It is my hope that as the program gains momentum our qualified congregation members will enlist for these important fields of service.

High school days are crucial. Youth make life-long commitments in the high school years. Often they choose their way of life and their life work. Youth needs the affection and counsel of the adults in the church, persons who are willing to give their time and

hearts and minds to be Bible class teachers and counselors. Our Augustana congregations have many persons who are highly qualified for these positions. They need to be found and recruited.

Some years ago I spent a morning with Dr. Stanley Jones, the famous evangelist-missionary-writer. At the time I was working as pastor for college students. "You are getting them too late," said Dr. Jones. "Work with them in the high school years."

Work with them in the high school years! We need consecrated, disciplined, understanding adults to do that. In the high school Bible class. In the high school Luther League.

Next fall the *Together* schools move into the districts of Kansas, Nebraska, Superior, Columbia and California conferences. Our prayer is that the congregations in those conferences will enlist their best qualified members to work with high school youth and send them to their district *Together* schools.

Some New Notes

November and December had many happy notes. But for two of our staff they were particularly happy. For the notes played out the wedding march. Ernestine Sanden became Mrs. Marlyn V. Larson. Her husband is the Augustana pastor at Tolley, N. Dakota. Hilvie Mae Olson became

Mrs. Jack Gross of Holyrood, Kansas. Mr. Gross is head of the public school music at Holyrood.

Naturally, we are very happy for both couples and wish for them everything good. But we are mighty sorry to lose Miss Sanden and Miss Olson. They have been invaluable members of our staff. Our department as well as church school workers throughout the country will miss them. Both Mrs. Larson and Mrs. Gross will continue to write *helps* articles in THE CHURCH SCHOOL TEACHER, however, so their fine influence will still be with us.

Staff Vacancies

There are now three vacancies to be filled in the Parish Education office. We need three assistants to the executive director to continue the work of teacher training. These persons must have completed a college education, must have had experience in public school teaching, and must be of sufficient maturity to work with church school teachers. Other qualifications such as experience in teaching Sunday school or counseling youth are also desirable. Readers of THE CHURCH SCHOOL TEACHER who are interested are asked to write to the Executive Director, Board of Parish Education, Augustana Lutheran Church, 244 Park Avenue, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Director's Column

By R. A. VOGLEY

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Time passes so rapidly. Have you ever considered how little time you have actually spent with the members of your class since last fall? Have you noticed any change in growth in them? Paul repeatedly tells us, "Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, making the most of every time." Even though it is a long time until next fall you actually have probably a maximum of forty hours with the members of your present class. Make the most of the time.

Stewardship Education

In co-operation with the Department of Stewardship and Finance, the Board of Parish Education plans to provide material each month which may be given to the members of your Sunday school. We will follow the calendar of releases with one exception. We will have a special release in either June or July highlighting Christian citizenship responsibilities in keep-

ing with the Christian citizenship emphasis.

There will be no special project for the Sunday schools. We are urging all Sunday schools to send in their regular benevolence offerings through their local church to the credit of their local church for the general work of the American Lutheran Church. If you have not seen a sample of our stewardship education release, please write to the board for a copy.

District Institutes

We remind you again that district church workers' institutes will be held at Texas, California, Northwest, Dakota, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Nebraska, Illinois, and Ohio. The dates for two institutes have not yet been definitely fixed. We plan to have three Bible study courses, a course on doctrine, a general departmental course for each department, and an introductory course on methods. Workshops will be conducted in the afternoon.

NOT INTO A VACUUM

The Community's Influence on the Child

By L. H. WESTBERG

THEY are not little nobodies, these babies born into our world. They come as individuals and bring with them their own God-given traits. Each has his own characteristics and potentials. Each, with something to offer the world, from the beginning makes his contribution without reserve. Sleepless parents testify to that.

Into a World

They are born, these babies, not into a vacuum, but into a world of people and things. Into a community. And immediately reciprocal influences come into play. The individual makes his influence felt by the community. The community places its stamp upon the individual.

These characteristics and relationships are not matters of the surface. The pietists of Finland say the education of a child begins a hundred years before he is born. Our human family is rooted in a togetherness. We and our com-

munities have ancestors. Deep calls to deep.

That God loves the child, forgives and accepts him through the sacrament of baptism, and places him into a community whose responsibility is to nurture him, is further evidence of the depth and the continuity of the community. For God who created the child moves in the community. He who in the beginning made the light offers Light to the community wanting it.

God's Settlement

The family is the child's first community. "God's Settlement," the Lutheran World Federation Study Commission on Education called it. Here are brought into play the subtle unconscious influences of love, kindness, humility, trustworthiness, integrity. Here the child first learns the relative importance of things and people. And here begins the first conscious efforts at schooling—how to ge-

long with fork and spoon, how get along with people, and how God is present every minute.

In the early years mother and father are the key people. However, the child already has a channel in his parents to the outside world. For his parents are in part the products of the larger community and could not if they could stop the flow of its influences upon their child.

It is rightly said that the central problem in childhood is the child's development as a child of God and the child's realization of himself as an individual. These he must do in the face of the community pressing upon him—Uncle Jim, Sister Mary, the postman, the neighbors, the playmates, the playthings, the trains and buses and automobiles, the cats and dogs, the flowers and trees, the newspapers, the books, the church. As he meets them, each presents a problem. As the child meets the problem and solves it he influences his community. But his community has had its effect on him, too.

The Public School

Not many years does the home have the child to itself. Soon the school becomes his new world, and as hand upon him becomes increasingly heavy. Parents are tempted to consider the school something separate from the family. Actually the school is an extension of the



family. It is important, therefore, that the Christian parents keep themselves informed about their community's schools and let their voices kindly but persuasively be heard.

The average public school teacher and administrator is a person dedicated to the best interests of our children and youth. Generally, they want to educate the whole child. Sometimes, however, powerful minorities taking advantage of the majority's lethargy are able to circumvent their high motives. Let us consider this further.

Christians believe that God created every person and that God desires each to glorify Him by his life. Surely this means he must

glorify God by the fullest development of his potentials, to be used for service to God and fellowmen. Christian parents, therefore, want good schools. Parents cannot, except in rare instances, educate their children without the help of the schools. Schools must help us equip our children to read, to write, to use the basic tools of thought so they can evaluate their own capacities and limitations and choose and develop a life's work.

In all this the person's freedom of will is to be held sacred. The community may not educate him for the community's own purpose, for he is God's. God does not force him; neither may we. Our task is simply to help the person find God's will and give him freedom to do it, using only reasonable means of gentle persuasion.

Now, the motives of all citizens



are not so high. Some may think the purpose of our schools is to turn out stenographers for the downtown offices. Some think the school is a football players' factory. Some consider it an orientation course for the armed services.

In communities north and south



there have been forces at work segregating children into first and second class citizens with corresponding grades of instruction. And most of us are guilty of withholding from our public schools the right to deal naturally in its curriculum with religion. Our interpretation of the doctrine of church and state has given the agnostic almost sole control of our schools. A recent conference of two hundred fifty public school administrators and church educators revealed definite dissatisfaction with leaving God out of the public school curriculum.

The public schools have great influence on the character of our people. The Christian's responsibility is to make the schools an influence for good. Today for example there is great need for qualified teachers. The church should be encouraging its youth to make teaching their career. Also if Christians are to help make the community godly, our church colleges should give its prospective

teachers techniques for making their witness. And if religion does find its rightful place in our public schools to what better source can our communities turn for teachers than to our church colleges, that if our colleges will recognize and meet the challenge.

The Larger Community

The child, of course, finally encounters the community as a whole, with all its cross currents of goodness and evil. Alongside the Community Chest, the Urban League, the Civil Liberties Union, and the churches are the selfish interests of those wanting to maintain in their own special privileges or profits. The child soon sees the conflicts. Both forces have their influence on him.

For example, much of today's television is in conflict with the educational standards of family, church and public school. Beer and liquor advertising are condoned by communities over half of

whose citizens belong to churches subscribing to temperance. Again, local corruption in government is something almost to be expected. A Chicago newspaper recently commended a policeman who insisted upon giving tickets to "privileged" persons for traffic violations! And many citizens, including church members, are less concerned about breaking speed laws than about getting caught. Finally, how far apart are not the message of Christmas and our words and deeds as nations.

Summary

Our children are by no means born into a vacuum. The community's hand is upon them from the beginning. Family, school, and general community should and can be a good influence. For God moves in them. His Light shines if we will but see it and walk by it. If we want the best for our children we should walk by it and make our communities godly.



"From Strength to Strength"



By ELSIE S. LINDGREN

"SUNDAY schools, the land over and in all denominations, are our most undisciplined schools. Children do as they please, confident that no punishment will be forthcoming . . ." Perhaps you read Amalia Bengtson Conrey's excellent article, "WHY VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL?", in *The Lutheran Companion* of June 15th this year. This paragraph has prompted many to ask, "What can we do? What are we doing?"

The problem is actual and it is complex. Superintendents of church schools know that when recruiting suitable teachers for our increasing classes, many candidates say truthfully that they feel incapable of coping with the nonchalant attitude of our children. Young teachers-in-training have been discouraged not only from participation in our teaching pro-

grams but from a lifetime of productive activity in educational fields, although they showed talent for such work.

The wear and tear on regular teachers, the wasted time and energy, as well as the accruing effect of poor discipline on children are all too familiar to need description. Poor discipline is a communicable disease. It needs prompt diagnosis and correct treatment to be checked. But let's not spank the baby for catching the germ from his brothers!

The article quoted from again pleads for more teacher training and more careful planning of all church teaching activities, a logical and well-advised program.

But the problem goes deeper than that—and the only real solution is a personal one for each individual teacher. Our teaching

guides and our parish education leaders over and over again have summed up for us the many practical ways of preparing a lesson to capture the restless minds of children, restless minds ever searching in the wrong places when carelessly guided) for something to build a life upon. Restlessness, however, can be led into channels of interested self-activity that may form such firm habits of attention that little opportunity remains for laxity in behavior. We know this!

How Fruitful?

And now, have we gone from strength to strength? How fruitful were our summer months, for instance? Perhaps we were unable to take part in Daily Vacation Bible School activities. We did read some but what books or articles did we seek out to help us understand and guide children in the large group of our pupils?

Did we remember our pupils, daily, in our prayers, even on vacation? And when on vacation, did we find something—a starfish, perhaps—and think, “This will be meaningful for Anne, or Bob, or Jack, whose special interest in the wonders of God’s creation may lead to new discoveries of God’s creative love.” Did we bring that starfish back to Anne, or Bob?

From the mountains and lakes and beaches where we vacationed, how many cards flew back to our

children in Christ, reminding them that our interest is in their whole life and not just in their Sunday morning behavior?

Dare we ask ourselves this question: “Do we love our pupils as well as our creature comforts?” If we truly do, our strength can be the rung which takes them on to new strength. Our loving interest may bring into their early lives the reality of unselfish human love—one tiny radiation from the immeasurable love of our Father!

“Rabboni”, Mary called Jesus (as you will remember from St. John’s account of Easter morning). Fully interpreted, Rabboni means my greatest teacher. Loving us, He was willing to die for us.

May His love overflow our hearts and touch the lives of our pupils! Strong in His love, let us move on to study our Bibles and our pupils more thoroughly, to read more thoughtfully and widely, to search more diligently for the things a child’s mind may fasten on to use as bases for real spiritual growth. Let us pray more earnestly for the power of the Holy Spirit in all our acts.

Let us go, with our pupils, from strength to strength. This is discipline. Let’s bring it back to our church schools.

Mrs. Lindgren is a member of First Lutheran, Montclair, New Jersey. She is a teacher and supervisor in her church school.

Christian Education (III)

The Learner's Part

By C. E. LINDER

Editor-in-Chief, American Lutheran Church

GOD, the teacher and the learner are the three indispensable partners in the Christian teaching-learning process. We know that our God is both able and most willing to perform His major part. But we need once more to remind ourselves that He can and will perform His part only as His two human partners perform their assigned parts.

What the teacher's part is we have already considered. We now turn to a consideration of the learner's part.

Man's Ability to Learn

In Genesis 1:26, 31 we are informed three times over that God made man in His own image. That is, God made man a person like Himself, with a mind so that man can learn to think as God does, with emotions so that man can learn to feel about everything as God does, and with a will so that man can learn to will to be and act as God does. No, God did not

make man another god, but He has made him only a little less than God (Psalm 8:5), so that man is capable of being a person enough like God that man and God can have intimate fellowship with one another.

Sin and the New Man

Unfortunately through the fall into sin man has corrupted the image of God in him and has lost his ability to grow in likeness to God. But God in His mercy has made it possible for fallen man to become a new creation in Christ Jesus (II Corinthians 5:17) with the potentiality, under the Spirit's empowering, like the man Christ Jesus, to increase in wisdom and in stature, and in favor with God and man. Luke 2:52.

Nevertheless the will to sin still clings to even the new creation in Christ. With Paul every reborn sinner must still confess, "I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do." Ro-

mans 7:19. Even a reborn Christian can and does set his own will against God's. Whenever he does that he is in no mood to learn to think as God does, or to feel and do as God does. In this sinful mood the learner makes it impossible for God and his teachers to teach him and for himself to learn. Hence the very first and repeated part that the learner must play in the Christian learning process is to permit the Spirit of God to work in him "both to will and to work for His good pleasure." Philippians 2:13.

Laws of Learning

In that God has made man in His own image He has written into man's very nature the laws according to which he learns. Therefore, if man is to do any effective learning, he must do it according to his God-given laws of learning. Any effort of his own or of his teacher that does not observe these laws is foredoomed to failure. Contrariwise the observance of these laws will in large measure affect the amount of real learning that will take place.

We should be grateful for psychologists like Thorndike, who have discovered and formulated these laws of learning for us. The first of these laws is *the law of readiness* which demands that the learner's previous learning, attention, interest and mental capac-

ity must be taken into consideration. The second is *the law of exercise* which requires of the learner that he work with what he is learning until it becomes his permanent possession. The third is *the law of effect* which requires that the learner must make the discovery of how the learning process is rendering him a genuine service.

Steps in Learning

Dr. Ligon of Union College lists these five steps in the learning process which must be taken by the learner before any significant learning can take place: exposure, repetition, understanding, conviction, application.

Exposure: The learner must take sufficient interest in and pay enough attention to what he is to learn that it can reach his thoughts, feelings and will.

Repetition: The learner must give sustained interest and attention until what he is to learn becomes permanently his own.

Understanding: The learner must seek to understand what he is learning under the guidance of his teacher and God until he has a sufficient grasp of the meaning.

Conviction: The learner must with the ability which God gives make what he has learned a matter of personal conviction, so that it motivates him to a firm faith and appropriate action,

Application: The learner must put into actual practice what he has learned and thus become a doer as well as a hearer of the Word.

Active Participation

The learner himself closes the sacred circuit of the Christian teaching-learning process. He must join hands with God and his teacher so that the power of God may freely flow into him and enable him to learn to think like God, to feel and to be and act like God.

The learner himself must open the door to his thoughts, emotions and will by paying attention and taking an active interest. He must himself be sufficiently interested in what he is learning to focus the powers of his mind on what he is to learn.

When God and his teacher lay new and additional knowledge before him, the learner must himself lay hold on it with the perceptive powers of his mind. And when God through His Spirit and the guidance of the teacher shows him the way to a deeper and more accurate understanding of what he is learning, the learner must himself think his way to the fuller and better understanding.

When his teacher and the Holy Spirit prompt the learner to discover for himself the great worth of what he is learning, he must himself be the discoverer. And

then, when his teacher and the Spirit of God confront him with the crucial necessity of taking the proper attitude (conviction, faith, feelings and will) toward what he is learning, it is he and he alone who must assume the appropriate Christian attitude.

When teacher and the Spirit urge upon him to improve the use of what he is learning in his everyday living, then the learner himself must be willing by actual practice to become more and more skillful in bringing his every thought, word and deed into increasing conformity with the will of God.

Must Lead to Habits

And when his teacher and God's Spirit keep working with him to build his attitudes and acts into life habits, it is again the learner himself who must by conscious effort form habits which are consistent with his Christian insights and convictions.

Only thus by the learner's active participation in the Christian teaching-learning process will he grow into a well-rounded Christian personality in the likeness of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Yes, it is the learner himself who by his active participation in the process must do the growing up into the fullness of the stature of Christ. But he can claim no personal credit for the growth.

The ability thus to grow Christward can come from God alone and is communicated to the learner through the Word under the guiding of a godly teacher and the inworking of the Holy Spirit. But even so no learner will achieve perfection: that will finally have to be granted him as a free gift of

God's grace in the life to come. Philippians 3:12-16.

In view of what has now been set down in these three articles on Christian Education, let there be much pupil participation, let the Christian teacher prove worthy of the dignity of his calling, and let all the glory be God's alone!

New Filmstrip on Supervision

"A MIRROR TO MYSELF"

Lightly and delightfully the filmstrip, "A Mirror to Myself," presents the difficult subject of supervision in our church schools. The story of what happened to Hazel Green seeks to arouse in teachers the need for regular evaluation and improvement of their work, to build a favorable attitude toward supervision and to help train some person or persons who may assume the role of helping teachers.

The user's guide contains many excellent suggestions and detailed helps to promote the cause of effective supervision in our church schools.

This is a 68 frame, art, black and white, sound filmstrip with 33 $\frac{1}{2}$ microgroove 10" record. Its running time is 14 minutes. It may be secured as a separate item at \$10 or as a part of the Church School Administration Audio-Visual Kit. Order from your Audio-Visual Department.

Growing Roses in Your Life

A story too seldom heard

By W. G. MONTGOMERY

IT WAS once believed that the winds blowing over the rich rose fields of Arabia, became so full of the sweet fragrance that they actually lulled to sleep and tamed lions in the desert beyond.

That was only a notion, of course. We now know that no amount of rose perfume would change the vicious nature of the lion; and yet the lion in human nature can be tamed with sweetness.

If you ever have an enemy, then sweetness is the only weapon you can ever use which will completely disarm him. The evil person can resist any other weapon. He can return blow for blow; but finds it impossible to strike back at goodness.

Among the Greatest

Saint Paul, in one of the greatest truths he ever presented, said, "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good." And Jesus tells us that if your enemy smite you on one cheek, then turn the

other also. This method, I'm sure, is the only way to defeat your enemy or silence those who might try to harm you.

Conquer With Kindness

You can conquer your enemy with kindness when a club would only start more trouble. Indeed, the strongest and bravest persons are those who never take up clubs against those who attack them. Instead, they return good for evil, love for hate, sweetness for bitterness, and in so doing, disarm those who are against them.

Weak persons and those who know nothing of the love of Christ can fight back, and usually do. It is only the strong who can turn the other cheek. Meekness is not weakness, and no amount of physical strength can ever stamp it out. Crush the Christian life down to earth today, and tomorrow it will rise up more fruitful and beautiful than ever.

Only love can conquer in the final count. Love your enemy and

soon you will have no enemy. But if you try to "get even" with him in the accepted ways of the world, you will wind up by having not one enemy but many others along with him. You don't put out a fire by adding fuel to it, but by taking away things it feeds upon.

The only peace treaty in America not signed, and the only one never broken, was one based upon love. It was Penn's treaty with the Indians. He loved and trusted them and they proved true to him. In all the wars that followed between the Indians and white settlers, not one Quaker was

ever harmed. Penn had conquered the red lion with roses. His sweetness had saved his people from the tomahawks.

Those old writers who believed lions could be tamed by roses really didn't put it strong enough. To be sure, the lions in the desert would not be changed by the sweetness of roses; but the lions in your nature and mine are different. Sweetness will save you and me by taming the lion in our nature. Growing roses in your own life will produce enough sweetness to disarm anyone who otherwise might try to injure you.

Help Us Teach Love

By ROBERT DOLF
Marquette, Michigan

These days, O God, when hate,
suspicion, strife,
Are rampant in and through our
daily life,
Please give us of Thy all-sufficing
grace
To teach, dear Lord, the children
that our place,
As Christians, is to truly love all
men,
No matter whom or how they are,
and then,
Please help us walk in love with
Thee each day.
All this in Jesus' precious name we
pray. AMEN.

The Bible and Reaching

By JOHN P. MILTON

THE call of Abraham in Gen. 12:1-3 contains one clause which, in literal translation, reads like this: "and be (thou) a blessing." This sentence strikes the keynote of our present theme, "The Bible and Reaching". The Hebrew verb is in the imperative; and while the imperative can be used to express *intended result*, and the translation in RSV as a result clause, "so that you will be a blessing", is therefore defensible, the choice of the imperative puts the emphasis on the intention. God not only promised to bless Abraham, but declared His intention to make him a blessing, and even commanded him to be a blessing.

In relation to those who are already in covenant with God education rather than evangelism is

the religious method or function which has the primary Biblical sanction. But what does the Bible have to say about evangelism, or about the missionary motif? An adequate answer will open up for our consideration three big areas in Biblical religion.

The first is that of the prophetic preaching of repentance to the lost sheep, or the rebellious children, or the house of Israel.

The starting point in O. T. religion is the concept of a people in covenant relationship with Jehovah, who had redeemed them from Egypt in fulfillment of His promise to the fathers, and who had brought them into a spiritual fellowship with Himself founded upon this redeeming act of grace. The classic passage that keynotes the situation is found in Ex. 19:3-6. Read it carefully. We shall have more to say about the missionary implications of this passage later. Right now we note that within this ideal covenant fellowship of grace which originates in an act of redemption God's wa-

This is the third and final article in a series by Dr. Milton, professor of Old Testament Literature at Luther Theological Seminary, St. Paul, Minn. The articles are adapted from lectures Dr. Milton presented at the 23rd Quadrennial Sunday School Teachers' Convention.

of dealing with His people was to teach them the good way in which He would have them walk, in order to fulfill their vocation as His priceless treasure, as a chosen people, as a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. But we note also that from the prophetic viewpoint the children of Israel had largely missed their calling, and had themselves become rebellious, and were no longer like teachable children who could be guided in the way, but rather like self-willed and stubborn rebels who needed to be "reached" and regenerated and reclaimed for a life within the covenant fellowship through a heart-searching preaching of repentance.

Teaching Is Reaching

It is at this point that "teaching" becomes "reaching" even in terms of the covenant people of God. Through the prophets God "reaches out" with fervent evangelistic preaching, pleading that His erring and rebellious children might repent of their evil ways, and be forgiven, and walk again with joy in the right and the good way.

We could easily multiply illustrations of this aspect of "reaching" in O. T. religion. Let me mention a few of the classic passages from the prophets, keyed by this emotional sentence from Deut. 5:29, "Oh that they had such a mind as this always, to fear

me and to keep all my commandments, that it might go well with them and with their children forever!"

In contrast with the spirit which the Lord desired we note the spirit described in Is. 1:2-4, and the truly evangelistic preaching in the rest of the chapter.

Reaching to Reclaim

Another example of prophetic preaching for repentance is found in the well-known words in Is. 55:6-9. The key-verb is the Hebrew *shuv*, which means "to turn", with the context indicating direction. It is used in the religious sense of turning away from God. That is apostasy. It is also used in the religious sense of turning back to God. That is repentance, in the broad sense of the term. We might call it conversion. But it is the conversion of such as have known the privilege of being God's people and have refused to walk in His ways. In relation to such as these the religious approach must be that of reaching to reclaim, of preaching to convert, of evangelism rather than of education.

Additional illustrations of this "reaching" function in prophetic religion are found in Amos 5, "Seek the Lord", and in the yearning love of God for His wayward people in Hosea 11, and in the Lord's controversy with His peo-

ple in Micah 6. We recall also the statement in Jer. 6:16,

"Thus says the Lord:

'Stand by the roads, and look,
and ask for the ancient
paths, where the good way
is; and walk in it, and find
rest for your souls.'

But they said, 'We will not
walk in it.' "

There is no verse in Scripture that shows more clearly how closely teaching and reaching are related: teaching, to show where the good way is, and to persuade the willing child to walk therein; reaching, to recall the rebellious and backsliding child to his senses, and to persuade him also to walk again in the way. In terms of our Sunday Schools it involves the recognition that not all children are living in happy covenant fellowship with the Lord, even though once received into covenant with Him in baptism.

II

But the teaching and reaching mission of the Church does not stop with those who are, nominally or really, the children of God. If it did, our efforts would seem suspiciously like those of a mechanic who spends all his time repairing a machine but never gets it in shape to run and do the work for which it was intended.

What was God's purpose with ancient Israel whom He deigned to call in a special sense His people? What is God's purpose with the Church?

The answer of Biblical religion is clear from Gen. 12 and on; for in the covenant of blessing with Abraham there is implied a missionary vocation which gives dynamic significance to the history of Israel and of the Christian Church.

Our Job

It begins with that strange command in Gen. 12:2, "and be thou a blessing". There is nothing selfish about the position of one who is called of God into His dynamic covenant fellowship. He has a purpose with His blessing, and He wastes no words in saying so. He did not ask Abraham what he thought about it; he told him what to do. Be a blessing! That was what God rightfully expected of him because of the blessings, spiritual and material, which He promised to give him, and to his seed after him.

What had Abraham to give? The answer is: that which he himself had received. For our purpose now it is important to note that Abraham in his personal capacity as a believer in Jehovah proved to be a blessing to others. His life is an illustration of the "reaching" function of O. T. religion.

But the call was not limited to Abraham, nor the blessings to men whom he personally encountered. In the latter part of Gen. 12:3 there is a prediction and a promise which is one of the most significant in all Scripture: "and in you all the families of the earth will be blessed". This promise is later connected with Abraham's seed or descendants. The thing to note is the scope of that promise. The blessing of Abraham was to be shared by all the families of the earth. One family, one nation, was chosen to be the mediator of God's promised spiritual blessings to all nations. That God did choose Israel for such a service is made perfectly clear in Ex. 19:3-6. In the climactic position in this outline of the basic provisions of the covenant at Sinai is God's clearly stated purpose that Israel should be to Him "a kingdom of priests". A spiritual service to others is the goal always of the covenant for those with whom the covenant is made. It was so in the covenant of blessing with Abraham. It was so in the covenant with Israel as a nation. If we have any lingering doubt as to what all this should mean for us it ought to be dispelled when we note how this whole picture from Ex. 19:6 of a priestly-royal position and function is transferred in the N.T. to the Church. Read, for example, Peter 2:9-10. There is through-

out the covenant no thought of a purely selfish privilege, but rather of a holy service; a missionary motif!

How fully Israel comprehended and how faithfully it fulfilled this missionary vocation is, of course, another question; just as it is with us today. There may seem to be very little evidence of actual missionary activity within the O. T. The impression that we get from the history is that Israel was too prone herself to go astray to be very effective in converting others. But the picture is not all dark. We do find some significant emphases on the missionary motif in Israel as we look into Scripture and into history. That is especially true in the prophets. See, for example, the reference to "foreigners" in Is. 56:6-8. Note the universalism of the Messianic hope in Is. 2:2-4 and Mic. 4:1-4, which in turn implies the missionary vocation of God's people Israel. Read the remarkable prophecy concerning Assyria and Egypt in Is. 20:19-25. One of the most outstanding illustrations of the missionary motif is in the Book of Jonah, which shows us both God's concern and the prophet's indifference for the people of Nineveh. As we come to the N. T. era there is some evidence of missionary zeal on the part of Israel in the references to "proselytes" or "converts". Nevertheless, we must conclude that

the missionary command was implicit rather than explicit throughout the O. T.; and that the universalism of the gospel, which can be seen in the very covenant with Abraham, was seen only by a few.

III

It is different when we move into the area of N. T. thought and of the Christian religion. There the preaching of the gospel to all men is, as it were, the dominant note; for God would have all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth: and men are called to discipleship because the Lord has need of them in this evangelistic, missionating, redemptive ministry of love.

To illustrate this third area of our theme would require another article. Let me simply state where these illustrations would lead us.

1. The illustration starts in heaven with God's redemptive love for all the world.

2. The entire life and ministry of our Lord is one beautiful illustration of what it means to reach out for the souls and lives of men in redeeming love.

3. The illustration is also to be seen in the N. T. interpretation of what God began to teach and to do in the O. T. See the application of "the blessing of Abra-

ham" to the Gentiles in Gal. 3.

4. The fourth illustration is in the frequent command to "Go, preach the gospel." The whole redemptive activity and purpose seems to focus on that command. See, for example, Mt. 28:18-20.

5. We could carry the illustration farther, into the missionary history in the Book of Acts, and into the letters of Paul with their dynamic enthusiasm for preaching the gospel wherever men would listen. As a concluding illustration read Rom. 10:9-15.

The Christian Church must be on the march if it is to be true to the spirit of the Christian religion. The very genius of Christianity makes it a religion bent on conquest. It cannot be indifferent to those who have not been reached with the gospel without losing its own soul. The Christian Church is called to be a Teaching Church in terms of itself and its members young and old. It is called to be a Reaching Church in terms of others, both such as have never heard the gospel and such as have rejected it, and have become wayward, rebellious children. I would not venture to say which is the more vital to the life of the Church, teaching or reaching. I would rather put it this way: We neglect either at our own peril!

What Do Children Inherit?

By SIDONIE MATSNER GRUENBERG

Editor of "The Encyclopedia of
Child Care and Guidance"

SHE'S the image of her father!", your next-door neighbor exclaims as she bends over your new-born daughter. She's right, of course—but only in a way.

The baby may indeed have her father's gray eyes and curly hair. She may even grow into a tall girl and like math as much as he does, but make no mistake about it, this child is different.

So is every other child born since the world began.

Little chemical substances known as genes gave your daughter her father's eyes or her mother's nose. They may also have given

her a hundred other qualities father and mother never had.

Combining in a limitless number of possibilities, they may give her the voice of a canary or of a crow. Her complexion may be fairer than her mother's, or a good deal darker than her father's. She may be as bright as one parent or brighter than either of them. Remember that determining genes may come from parents, grandparents, even great-grandparents.

But whatever she is, depends only in part on heredity. At least as important is how you let her develop.

Parents naturally want to make the most of their children's potentials, but sometimes they don't understand that because of the nature of the wonderful human animal, this cannot always be done.

As an excellent article on this subject in "The Encyclopedia of Child Care and Guidance" makes clear, children are born with so very many characteristics that only some of them can ever be developed.



Studies have shown that a Turkish baby, for example, could grow into a "typical" American. Brought to this country early enough, he could develop such traits as wit, mechanical ability, easy-going friendliness, and others we may think of as "American."

The same thing could be true in reverse—if an American child were raised in a Turkish village.

What operates in a case of this sort is not so much heredity as the all important *selection of which inherited traits to develop*.

If you love music, for example, your child probably will. By listening to you play an instrument, or hearing fine music on records from earliest childhood, his latent musical abilities are likely to develop.

Similarly, if you have a way with words, your child, trying to imitate you, will develop his own latent ability to handle words. The same would apply to an interest you may have in acting or building, chemistry or doctoring.

But don't make the mistake of forcing your own preferences even though you are anxious for your child to make the most of *his* endowment. Develop the practice that child guidance experts sometimes refer to as "watchful negligence." Watch your child closely, but give him enough leeway to let him discover his interests.



If you'd like to gain more information about your child's many abilities than you may be able to get by observing him, you can use a good aptitude testing service.

Modern techniques can give Child Guidance Counselors a pretty good line on the potential abilities of even a toddler. Long before a child can read or write, he can take tests that involve handling blocks, placing pegs in boards, identifying similar pictures, and other such simple tasks. Far from knowing or caring that they are being tested, most children have fun in the counselor's office.

Use the information gained from tests to supplement your own observations of your child's talents.

If he shows a natural ability that you have too, fine. But if he happens to prefer other natural abilities, let him develop them.

Bear in mind that heredity makes your child like you—but only in a way.

Your Thoughts Are You

By JUSTA LEE ALLEN

THERE is a book on the market titled: *YOU ARE WHAT YOU EAT*. In Proverbs 23:7 we read: "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." One statement refers to the physical life; the other to the spiritual, and there is a strong analogy between the two.

What Does It Mean?

"You are what you eat" does not mean, of course, that when a man eats a carrot he becomes a carrot any more than a carrot becomes soil, sunshine and rain, which nourish the carrot. It does mean that, to a large extent, he is physically well or ill, weak or strong, fat or lean, according to his choice of foods.

It is equally true that we are spiritually weak or strong, good or bad, little souls or great souls, according to the thoughts we indulge in. Someone has said: "Tell me what a person thinks about when alone, and I will tell you what kind of person he is."

A mother being interviewed by a magazine writer said she had reared her daughter to live alone,

in case she should not marry, and be happy while doing so. She gave her daughter a good education, and encouraged her interest in worthwhile hobbies, church activities, and other services—interests that breed good thoughts. The interviewer remarked that such a daughter probably would *not* live alone. Not only was she good company for herself, but she would make the best kind of companion for her future husband.

As in the right choice of foods, good thoughts call for the selection and rejection of thought material. And only the best will do. Someone has thoughtfully said: "Life is so short we do not have time for all the good things—only for the best."

Top of the List

Topping the list of thought material is reading matter. At the very top, we place the Holy Bible, because it truly is the Book of books, even from a literary standpoint. Next comes other inspiring literature: biography of great personalities, essays, history and poetry. One busy mother

vowed that each day she would read at least a chapter, page, or even a paragraph of some good literature—material to give her food for thought while her hands were kept busy about necessary duties for her family.

Various Choices

There is the same necessity for choosing friends, music, and one's lifework. These should all be ennobling for they, too, become thought material. Dr. Elton Trueblood, a widely-read author of religious books in America today, states that, in regard to one's lifework, the fact is, though sad, that vast numbers of persons are unhappy in their work. Being a square peg in a round hole is not ennobling. Consequently, his conviction is that the place to decide one's lifework is on one's knees.

Neither are thoughts which express themselves in such things as destructive criticism, discontent and fault-finding, ennobling. Such thoughts constitute poor food for spiritual nourishment. Jesus, our pattern, was never known to indulge in destructive criticism; there is no record of His expressing discontent with His lot, nor did He engage in finding fault with those weaker than Himself.

One well known public figure who, in her bewilderment, sought and found peace in God, points

out that what we see in life, and in others, is really our own thoughts which, somehow, get out of our minds and hearts and around in front of our eyes which should account for the fact that some see only evil and ugliness where others see good and beauty.

Ralph Waldo Emerson realized the importance to himself of his thoughts of others. He said: "I try to think every person I meet is better than I, so that by so thinking I may strive to become what he appears to me to be."

Our Thoughts Govern

When writing the proverb, "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he," the writer did not need to tell us *how* this is so. It does not take much human experience to know that, eventually, we come to accept—or absorb—those things we choose to think about. And, being governed by the things we accept, so we act and become. If you think often enough, and favorably enough, about swimming, eventually you will go swimming. If you keep thinking about a certain musical program, you will go to the music hall. If a book holds your attention, eventually you will read the book. If you think often enough about attending church, the day will come

men you will be in church. Commercial advertizers know well this psychological fact and, accordingly, strive to keep their ears constantly in the individual's thinking.

Your thoughts truly are you. The prerequisite of a gentle person is gentle thoughts. The prerequisite of a good person is good thoughts. The prerequisite of a noble or great person is noble or great thoughts. *But gentle, good,*

noble or great thoughts come only from a Christ-refined heart which chooses to think upon things gentle, good, noble and great. We think; we accept; we act; we become—in that order. The poet has clearly expressed, in other words, the same truth:

"Whate'er thou lovest, man,
That, too, become—t h o u
must—
God, if thou lovest God,
And dust, if thou lovest dust."

A Sunday School Teacher's Prayer

ROBERT DOLF,

Marquette, Mich.

Dear Jesus, be my daily Guide,
And help me by Your Holy Word
abide.

Please help me, Lord, each day to
live

A Christian life so that I will not
give

Offense to children anywhere,
Especially to those within my care.

AMEN.

Three Meditations for January

By KIRBY PAGE

CARNEGIE HALL in New York City was packed to overflowing. All of us were spellbound by the sheer loveliness of the voice coming from the stage. Then the applause was deafening and prolonged. Nearly thirty years later in Pasadena I was moved to tears and to exultation by that same incomparable voice.

The artist was Roland Hayes. He was the first Negro to achieve eminence as a concert singer. Race prejudice was deep and high. With difficulty did he find a competent teacher of voice. Finally he was accepted as a pupil by an operatic singer in Boston, on condition that the lessons be given in the teacher's home, in order not to embarrass the white pupils. When ready for a concert tour, he was unable to find a manager who would make arrangements for a Negro singer. He had to make his own engagements, and on tour had much trouble in finding hotels and restaurants which would accommodate him. Music critics were reluctant to accept a Negro as a serious artist.

His first high acclaim came while on concert tour in Europe. He gave a command performance before the King and Queen of England, and appeared before notable audiences in continental capitals. News of all this reached musical circles in the United States and it became easy to obtain professional management for his tours which became continuous ovations. His earnings reached the top figure of twelve thousand dollars for a single performance.

One columnist wrote: "Roland Hayes sang of Jesus, and it seemed to me that this was what religion ought to be. . . . I saw a miracle in Town Hall. Half of the people were black and half were white and while the mood of the song held, they were all the same. They shared together the close silence. One emotion wrapped them. And at the end it was a single sob." Thus God blessed the black singer with a precious voice.

* * *

For sheer joy you can scarcely match the experience of St. Francis.

Assisi. He enjoyed God and he enjoyed people. He was so grateful to God for his conversion and transformation that he never ceased from giving praise. He lived on this earth only forty-four years, from 1182 to 1226, but from the moment of his awakening to the drawing of his last breath, his words and his deeds were a continuing stream of thanksgiving.

Francis loved people, all kinds of people. He loved people with self-giving concern for them and with radiant satisfaction at being with them. His tender care of others fills one with awe at such deep compassion. Every beggar he recognized as a holy temple of God, worthy to be treated with respect and reverence. He really loved his enemies, even when they abused him and pelted him with stones.

His love of nature has rarely been equaled. He entered into companionship with the birds and talked with them as with other friends. He gloried in flowers and the moon and in the sun. Everywhere he found evidence of the outreaching, immeasurable love of God.

His life is a glowing illustration of the truth later expressed by Ralph Waldo Emerson: "Let me where'er I will I hear a sky-music still. It sounds from things old, it sounds from all

things young, from all that's fair, from all that's foul, peals out a cheerful song. . . . In the darkest, meanest things, there always, always something sings."

Because Francis enjoyed God and nature and people, he was extraordinarily free from selfishness. He was a genius of the spirit, a God-intoxicated troubadour, and one of the most Christlike of all followers of our Lord.

* * *

A blind astronomer was describing for us the portion of the heavens which we were seeing through the big telescope. The glass was turned to the rings of Saturn and we listened to an explanation. Our guide through the starry firmament was Dr. Edwin Brant Frost, Director of the Yerkes Observatory at Williams Bay, Wisconsin.

From childhood he had poor vision. The loss of his right eye came about twenty years before his death. In another five years a cataract closed his left eye, leaving him with three per cent vision. And soon he was confined within the realm of physical darkness. Yet he continued at his post for more than a decade. Night after night with the assistance of a colleague and the help of a vivid memory, he examined remote points in celestial space.

Dr. Frost's extraordinary memory was the result of much practice. Being warned in advance of impending blindness, he concentrated on the development of this faculty. From dark to daylight, month after month, he had spent the hours in full exposure to the night. There was much to be seen. So vast is the great nebula of Andromeda that light takes 50,000 years to cross it, and so far away that its light requires a million years to reach us. The total number of stars in the entire universe has been estimated by students

at 10,000 million-million-million

In the words of Immanuel Kant Dr. Frost could cry out: "We are living in a world which is but a little island of the known, washed on every shore by the waters of the unknown." He was filled with holy awe by immensity, distance, precision and beauty. A deeply religious man by training and experience, he could testify, in Longfellow's words: "From the cisterns of the midnight air my spirit drank repose; the fountain of perpetual peace flows there,—from those deep cisterns flows."



"HAPPY NEW YEAR!"